(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) An exercise has been undertaken to formulate an approach towards a new draft on technology policy in the context of various changes introduced in the economic system of the country. A process of consultation has also begun. A draft paper for a new technology policy has been placed before the Science and Technology Committee of Parliament for their views, before finalising the same.

The draft paper includes section on technology and society; technology and environment; human skills; thrust areas; role of research; development and engineering (R&DE); resources for R&DE; linkages; policy implementation; and monitoring and review.

Joint venture by HMT in Dubai

*229. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that HMT (International) Ltd., the export subsidiary of the HMT Ltd., is setting up a foundary in Dubai in a joint venture; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) HMT (International) Limited have proposed participation in a joint venture project in Dubai, UAE for setting up an Alloy Steel Foundry in association with M|s. Sri Ramakrishna Steels Industries Limited (SRSI), Coimbatore and M|s. Easa Saleh Al Gurg, Dubai. The Capital cost of the project is 15.055 million Dirhams. The share of the three partners in the equity of the project is to be 7 percent for HMT (I). 33 per cent for SRSI and 60 per cent for M|s. Al Gurg.

Import of paper

*230. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what would be the projected demand of writing and printing papers in the country by the year 2000;

(b) what is the cost of all kinds of papers imported in 1991-92 and 1992-93;

(c) what is the annual production of paper in the country and what is the capacity of paper manufacturing units remaining unutilised together with the reasons thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken to increase domestic production and allowing import of all kinds of papers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) The projected demand of paper and paper board in the country by the year 2000 AD is estimated at about 28.35 lakh tonnes.

(b) Import of paper board and manufactures during the two years is as under :—

	(Provisionsal figures) Rs. lakh
1991-92	14725.50
1992-93 (April '92—Nov. '92)	11596.39

(c) The production of paper and paper board during 1992 is estimated to be about 21 lakh tonnes. At present, 77 paper units with an installed capacity of about 6.45 lakh tonnes in the country are not reporting production. They are either sick or lying closed. The main reasons for sickness in the paper industry are indaequate availability of raw materials, outdated and mis-matched equipment, inadequate availability of power and coal, and management problems.

(d) The paper and paper board industry is meeting the entire domestic demand for common varieties of paper and paper board. Imports consist of some speciality papers such as art paper, cheque paper, photo base paper, high strength craft paper, filter paper, cable and condensor paper, etc. Import of paper, except paper for security printing, currency paper, stamp paper and other special types of paper, is not regulated and is freely allowed under the EXIM policy without the need of an Import Licence. The Government have, however, taken following steps to encourage production of paper and paper board in the country :

(i) Paper units based on use of minimum 75 per cent pulp derived from bagasse, agricultural residues and other non-conventional raw materials have been exempted from industrial licensing subject to locational angle.

(ii) Manufacture of writing and printing paper and uncoated craft paper containing not less than 75 per cent by weight of pulp made from rice and wheat straw, jute, mesta or bagasse or mixture thereof or mixture of two or more of the pulps of the aforementioned materials is exempted from excise duty.

(iii) Import of waste papers has been freely allowed without the need of an Import Licence at a low rate of customs duty (20 per cent).

Proposal to amend the Companies Act

*231. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to amend the Companies Act to make the annual environment audit of the companies compulsory:

(b) if so, the details thereof and the circumstances leading to such changes in the law; and

(c) what, infrastructure has been proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) Environmental Audit is provided for under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Government is, however, considering a proposal to amend the Companies Act requiring the companies to disclose in the Directors' Report such particulars regarding environmental protection, as may be prescribed.

ग्राम सभाओं का पुनर्गठन

*232. **श्री राम गोपाल यादव :** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ग्राम सभाओं का पुनर्गठन करने का विचार रखती है, यदि हां, तो क्या इसके लिए न्यूनतम जनसंख्या सीमा 250 निश्चित करने का कोई प्रस्ताव है ;